

## APD ALERT

### USDA License Plates



(1)



(2)

### **BACKGROUND**

The Federal Government changed the design and requirements of official Federal license plates. The intent was to help increase license plate security, establish plate expiration dates, and eliminate the need for identification decals in the rear window of Government vehicles. The new official plate is embossed with the Department logo and has an 8-year expiration date (see Figure 1). The new plate is available as a pair (for traditional vehicles) and as a single plate (for trailers, etc., that access public roads).

**By October 2011** GSA requires agencies to replace all old style plates with the new official plate. As a reminder, UNICOR ([www.unicor.gov](http://www.unicor.gov)) is the mandatory source for license plates. UNICOR's License Plate System (LPS) is a web-based system that interfaces with the new Federal Motor Vehicle Registration System (FMVRS). The FMVRS is the official database of all official vehicles and license plates registered to the Federal Government. Agencies must register all official plates and the vehicle/equipment associated with each official plate in the FMVRS.

### **POLICY**

Area fleet managers are responsible for replacing all old style license plates with the new style license plate no later than **October 2011**. This includes both the traditional style plate for vehicles and the single style plate for trailers etc., that access public roads. UNICOR's LPS allows fleet managers to replace old style plates with new plates using the same plate number. However, managers must place the new tag on the same vehicle. Refer to UNICOR's instructions for ordering bulk replacement plates.

USDA designed a new ID plate for equipment that does not require an official plate, such as ATVs, Gators, tractors, etc., and does not routinely travel on public roads (see Figure 2). Previously, fleet managers assigned the old style single plate to this equipment. However, now that agencies must register official license plates in the FMVRS, fleet managers must replace the old style license plate assigned to off-road equipment with the new ID plate, as appropriate.

Most State laws exempt agricultural equipment, Gators, ATVs, etc., from displaying official license plates for intermittent road access, but may require a form of clear identification. The new ID plate meets this requirement. Fleet managers should refer to State law where the equipment is primarily operated in to determine the style plate or identification needed. The ID plate is available in both pair and single style. Fleet managers should use either style as appropriate. Fleet managers may not use the ID plate on traditional vehicles and large trailers that travel on public roads and require official plates. Fleet managers will not update the FMVR with ID plate numbers and associated equipment.

For security reasons, when an official license plate or ID plate is lost or stolen, fleet managers will remove the plate number from service. Do not reuse the number of a lost or stolen plate by ordering a replacement tag. This will cause confusion in determining legitimate plates. Use the replacement tag option in UNICOR's LPS for requesting an individual new style plate for an old style plate or for a damaged plate that is still in your possession.

Enclosed is USDA's License Plate Ordering Process. This document provides an overview of the process, lists the cost for plates and ID tags, and provides instructions for license plate recycling through UNICOR.

## **CONTACT**

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Enclosure

# USDA License Plate Ordering Process

## Background

The Property Management Division (PMD) under the Office of Procurement and Property Management (OPPM) has implemented a new License Plate Ordering Process that has eliminated the use of the Beltsville Service Center as the central location for ordering tags. This new process also provides the agencies the flexibility and control of ordering their own tags as needed. Furthermore, the process has become more efficient and cost-effective, while eliminating some agency issues from the past.

## Ordering Process

### New License Plates

Under the new process, agencies are required to order their tags directly from the Federal Prison Industries' (UNICOR) web-based License Plate System (LPS). The Agencies' Fleet Managers have access to the LPS and may designate other agency users to access the LPS for tag ordering. There is no limit to how many users a Fleet Manager can designate to order license plates.

To begin the tag ordering process, agency Fleet Managers designate their users to PMD, and PMD will submit those names to UNICOR for access to the LPS. UNICOR will send an email to the users letting them know that their system access has been granted. Users may then log into the LPS and order tags as needed using a Purchase Card or a Purchase Order (PO) Number. (To gain a PO number, users should work with their procurement office.) UNICOR will manufacture and ship the tags so that they are delivered within 20 business days. Once the license plates are received, the user must confirm receipt with UNICOR. Figure 1 below illustrates this process.

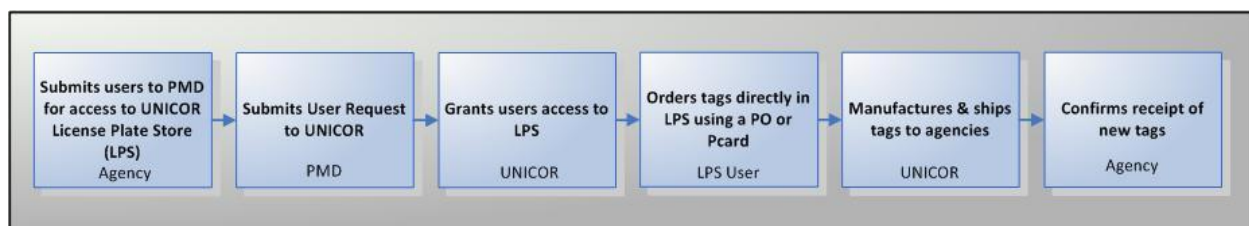


Figure 1: USDA License Plate Ordering Process

### License Plate Costs

Large vehicle-type tags cost \$7.50 plus shipping, and the smaller motorcycle-type tags costs \$3.89 (for a single plate) plus shipping. Orders may be shipped to multiple locations through the LPS. Shipping costs are dependent on the number of tags shipped to one location; therefore, the more tags shipped to one location, the lower the shipping costs per tag. See Table 1 for a list of the shipping costs.

Min. Quantity	Max. Quantity	Freight Charge	Boxes
1	5	\$ 10.00	1
6	10	\$ 15.00	1
11	20	\$ 20.00	1
21	50	\$ 40.00	1
51	100	\$ 75.00	1
101	150	\$ 115.00	2
151	200	\$ 150.00	2
201	250	\$ 188.00	3
251	300	\$ 225.00	3
301	350	\$ 263.00	4
351	400	\$ 300.00	4
401	450	\$ 338.00	5
451	500	\$ 375.00	5
501	550	\$415.00	6

Table 1: Shipping Costs

### ID License Plates vs. Normal License Plates

UNICOR has also granted USDA the ability to order ID License Plates. An ID License Plate is a tag used for vehicles that do not leave their post/facility. These would include any vehicles that do not travel on public roads and pieces of equipment (e.g., trailers, snowmobiles, heavy equipment) that need a tag to identify them but do not access public roads. For example, a snowmobile that is not captured in the Federal Automotive Statistical Tool (FAST) system and does not have a traditional Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) may have an ID License Plate instead of the traditional motorcycle plate. Examples of the ID License Plate design versus a Normal License Plate design are displayed in Figures 2 and 3 below.\* **NOTE:** The Normal License Plate design now includes an Expiration Date; previous vehicle tags prior to (date) did not have an expiration date.



Figure 2: ID License Plate Design



Figure 3: Normal License Plate Design

Users should be reminded that ID License Plates (Figure 2) should NOT be placed on vehicles that have public road usage or any vehicle that is reported in the annual FAST report. Vehicles that travel on public roads must have a Normal License Plate (Figure 3) on them.

UNICOR manages the tag numbering for USDA. Duplicates are not allowed once the tag number has been used. Users are notified of the next available tag number in the USDA series when they go to order tags, so USDA does not have to keep track of the tag numbers in a separate spreadsheet or system. USDA policy requires that in the case of a lost or stolen license plate the plate number will not be reused, since it will cause confusion in determining the whereabouts of the legitimate plate.

### The FMVRS Interface

GSA has implemented the Federal Motor Vehicle Registration System (FMVRS) that captures information for all Government-owned/operated vehicles. The FMVRS assists law-enforcement with quickly and accurately identifying the vehicles uploaded in the system. When new vehicles are ordered through GSA, the vehicle information (minus garage location and point of contact) will be added into the FMVRS directly from GSA. Furthermore, when license plates are ordered there is an interface between UNICOR's LPS and the FMVRS, which gives the Fleet Manager the ability to complete the match between the two systems without doing a complete manual data upload.

### Replacement License Plates

Per GSA guidance, all government vehicles that have road access must display license plates with expiration dates by October 1, 2011. Therefore, USDA is requiring that agencies replace all of their old tags (ones without expiration dates) with the new ones. Agencies can determine their own replacement schedule as long as it adheres to the October 2011 deadline. The current license plate number that is associated with a particular vehicle may be reordered through the LPS as long as it is placed on the same vehicle. For example, if Vehicle A with VIN number 12345678ABCDEFGHI is associated with tag number A123456, then A123456 may be reordered and placed on Vehicle A only. (This allows fleet coordinators to retain the same fleet charge card associated with Vehicle A because the license plate number has not changed)

When utilizing the LPS, a user can order replacement license plates one at a time or in bulk. For bulk replacements, the user should click on the “Copy Your List” tab in the LPS and follow the instructions on the screen. See the depiction of this in Figure 4 below.

New Tags Replacement Tags **Copy Your List**

Department of Agriculture Standard Plates

SKU: PLATEUSDA01

You may only order replacement tags with this feature; to order new plates, select 'New Tags' above and enter the desired quantity - UNICOR will assign you the next available numbers.

☐ Pair  
☐ Single

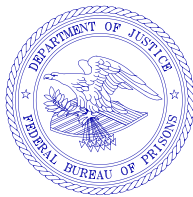
You may order many plates quickly by copying a list of plate numbers from your source document/spreadsheet into the text box. One tag number per line. 24,000 character limit. Characters remaining: 24000

Add to Cart

Figure 4: Copy Your List Tab in LPS for Replacements

## License Plate Recycling

UNICOR has agreed to collect and recycle all unused tags at no cost to USDA. Shipping is paid through the UNICOR shipping account. Agencies can use the same package the new tags arrive in to send the old tags back to UNICOR. UNICOR will send out a formal notification that the old tags were destroyed. UNICOR will also update the FMVRS with tags that have been destroyed. Since the FMVRS and the UNICOR system has an interface established, it would behoove Fleet Managers to send their license plates back to UNICOR for destruction/recycling. The Standard Operating Procedures established by the U.S. Department of Justice for recycling of license plates can be found in Appendix A.



**U.S. Department of Justice**

## **UNICOR Sign Factory**

Federal Prison Industries, Inc.

Federal Correctional Institution

14601 Burbridge Road, S.E.

Cumberland, MD 21502

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## **Recycling of Obsolete Federal License Plates**

All tags will be documented on the attached form. A copy of this form will be placed in each box being returned to UNICOR.

All tags will be returned to the factory via UPS, using account number **A5678T**. Return tags to:

**UNICOR**

**14601 Burbridge Road, SE**

**Cumberland, MD 21502**

**Attn: Tag Recycling**

**If you do not already have an account set up with UPS, please call 301.784.1000, extension 4018. Our Warehouseman will ensure that UPS has the proper paperwork when they come to pick up your tags.**

Upon arrival at UNICOR, the plates will be inventoried, and any discrepancies will be immediately documented, and reported to the point of contact on the return form.

Once the all of the plates have accounted for by UNICOR, they will be destroyed and the scrap will be recycled.

After the plates have been destroyed, UNICOR will certify their destruction by signing the bottom of the form and returning it to the agency point of contact listed on the form.

UNICOR will log the plates in the FMVRS as “DS” (Destroyed).

**Are these Plates already in the FMVRS?**

**Federal Motor Vehicle License Plate Return Form**



Date \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Fax \_\_\_\_\_

[illegible][illegible]

I certify that the above listed license plates have been recieved at the UNICOR, Cumberland, Md facility, and that these license plates have been destroyed, and are no longer able to be used as vehicle license plates. I also certify that these license plates have been listed as destroyed in FMVRS.

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UNICOR Staff

Date \_\_\_\_\_

